

I will intend to work with nations, especially the poor and developing nations, to show the world that there is a better approach, that we can build our future prosperity along a cleaner and better path.

My budget includes over \$220 million for the U.S. Agency for International Development and the global environmental facility to help developing countries better measure, reduce emissions, and to help them invest in clean and renewable energy technologies. Many of these technologies, which we take for granted in our own country, are not being used in the developing world. We can help ensure that the benefits of these technologies are more broadly shared. Such efforts have helped bring solar energy to Bangladesh, hydroelectric energy to the Philippines, geothermal electricity to Kenya. These projects are bringing jobs and environmental benefits to these nations, and we will build on these successes.

The new budget also provides \$40 million under the Tropical Forest Conservation Act to help countries redirect debt payments towards protecting tropical forests, forests that store millions of tons of carbon. And I've also ordered the Secretary of State to develop a new initiative to help developing countries stop illegal logging, a practice that destroys biodiversity and releases millions of tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

And finally, my Government is following through on our commitment to provide \$25 million for climate observation systems in developing countries that will help scientists understand the dynamics of climate change.

To clean the air and to address climate change, we need to recognize that economic growth and environmental protection go hand in hand. Affluent societies are the ones that demand and can, therefore, afford the most environmental protection. Prosperity is what allows us to commit more and more resources to environmental protection. And in the coming decades, the world needs to develop and deploy billions of dollars of technologies that generate energy in cleaner ways. And we need strong economic growth to make that possible.

Americans are among the most creative people in our history. We have used radio

waves to peer into the deepest reaches of space. We cracked life's genetic code. We have made our air and land and water significantly cleaner, even as we have built the world's strongest economy. When I see what Americans have done, I know what we can do. We can tap the power of economic growth to further protect our environment for generations that will follow. And that's what we're going to do.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:05 p.m. in the Science Center at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In his remarks, he referred to NOAA Administrator Conrad "Connie" C. Lautenbacher, Jr.; and Sasha Cohen, figure skater, 2002 U.S. Olympic team. The President also referred to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol to the convention.

Statement on Proposed Pension Security Legislation

February 14, 2002

I applaud Congressmen John Boehner and Sam Johnson for introducing legislation today to strengthen the retirement security of American workers. Consistent with the principles that I outlined at the beginning of this month, their bill would protect workers by giving them freedom to manage their own retirement savings, fair notice of any blackout period, and better access to sound investment advice. This bill also assures that corporate officers would be held to the same restrictions as those imposed on workers.

This bill, and other good legislation like that introduced by Congressmen Portman and Cardin, will help provide economic security to both workers and shareholders. I look forward to working with the Congress in a bipartisan fashion to enact these important protections into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 3762, the "Pension Security Act," and H.R. 3669, the "Employee Retirement Savings Bill of Rights."

**Remarks Following the Swearing-In
of Gaddi H. Vasquez as Director of
the Peace Corps**

February 15, 2002

Thank you very much. Welcome to the White House.

When America was attacked on September the 11th, they thought our country would splinter into fear and selfishness. They thought we'd fall apart. They thought we didn't have any fiber or character. Instead, we've seen extraordinary acts of courage and compassion and a renewed dedication to service. A spirit of sacrifice and service gave birth to the Peace Corps more than 40 years ago. We needed the Peace Corps then, and we need the Peace Corps today.

My administration strongly supports the Peace Corps, and we're increasing our commitment to it. That starts by finding somebody who can serve ably as the Director. I have found such a man. I was honored to swear Gaddi in, in the Oval Office—or watch his swearing-in today in the Oval Office, and I know he'll do a superb job in leading this important organization.

Thank you for leaving your beloved California. Thank you for your sacrifice. And welcome to an administration that wants to do right by the Peace Corps.

I also want to thank Elaine for your sacrifice, as well. I know it's hard to pull up your family and head east, but it's the right thing to do. It's the right thing to do to serve your country. And I'm so honored both of you all have come. And Jason, thank you for being here, as well, to support your dad.

I want to thank the first Peace Corps Director, who joined us today. I can't thank you enough, Sargent Shriver, for taking time out of your busy schedule to show up here to see this good man assume this important office. We're honored with your presence. We appreciate your service to the country, and thank you for coming.

And we've got another former Director here today, too, a lady who serves in my Cabinet as the Secretary of Labor. She's doing a fabulous job there, just like she did for the Peace Corps, and that's Elaine Chao. Thank you for coming, Elaine.

And Gaddi was such a big draw that he got another member of my Cabinet here, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Mel Martinez. Thanks for coming, Mel. I appreciate your being here.

Two Members of the United States House of Representatives have joined us: Gaddi's Congressman, Chris Cox—thank you for coming, Chris; I appreciate you being here—and a former volunteer, Tom Petri from Wisconsin. Thank you for coming.

We hear from a lot of Members of Congress about the importance of the Peace Corps but no more clear voice about that than Chris Dodd, the Senator from Connecticut. I look forward to working with Chris to implement our mutual vision for making sure the Peace Corps fulfills its mission and hope.

And speaking about that, I want to thank all the people who work at the Peace Corps, those who work there now, those who have been volunteers in the past, are current volunteers. We're honored that you serve our Nation, and you're welcome here in the White House, and thank you for coming.

And finally, I think it's a great tribute to the Peace Corps that we've got a lot of members from the ambassadorial corps who are here. I want to thank you all for coming and taking your time. You understand the importance of the Peace Corps, and your presence here is a confirmation of its importance. And so we welcome you. Thank you for coming.

For more than 40 years, the Peace Corps has sent Americans to serve their country by serving the world. America has a new kind of force today. I mean, we're not only a great country, a great economic engine, and obviously a great military, we're a great idea. The greatness of the country is in the values we believe in, freedom and hope and opportunity. We're a nation founded on just valuable principles. And the power of the idea cannot and will not be stopped at our borders.

The Peace Corps volunteers carry the American idea with them. They don't carry our culture; they carry universal values and principles that are so incredibly important for all of mankind. Peace Corps volunteers contribute in unaccountable ways to the countries to which they're assigned. They not only